

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/667,377

Applicant(s)

YAMADA, HIDEAKI

Examiner

Art Unit

Amir Alavi

2624

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Response received on 24 July 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-12.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 20030923
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

- The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The present invention is directed towards an image processing apparatus which combines various predetermined data such as image data, character data and voice data or the like with original image data to generate combined image data and separates the various predetermined data from the combined image data. The closest prior art, Kobayashi et al. (USPN 4,409,623), shows a similar system, in which, a gray scale facsimile signal is divided into a plurality of block signals, each composed of a plurality of picture element signals, for each block signal are obtained binary space information indicating whether the level of each picture element signal is higher or lower than a threshold value, mean gradation information of the picture element signals having the levels above the threshold value and mean gradation information of the picture element signals having levels below the threshold value. When the difference between the two pieces of mean gradation information representing the gradation of the block signal is smaller than a predetermined value and/or when the number of picture element signals of the levels either higher or lower than the threshold value is smaller than a predetermined value, the block signal is represented by one of the two

pieces of gradation information and the entire space information of the block signal is set to one value of the binary space information. The space information thus obtained is coded in the same manner as conventional binary facsimile signals and the gradation information is coded in accordance with the run length of successive blocks of the same gradation information. The coded data of the space information and the coded data of the gradation information are combined and delivered out.

However, Regarding claims 1,2,5 and 6 Kobayashi et al. fail to address: "for data combining means for combining predetermined data with original image data on a pixel position with a lower limit gray scale value in a direction of gray scale value decrease and generating combined image data"; Regarding claims 3 and 4

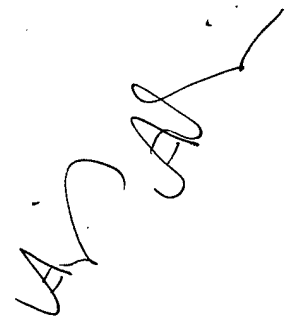
Kobayashi et al. fail to address: "for data combining means for combining predetermined data with original image data on a pixel position with an upper limit gray scale value in a direction of gray scale value increase and generating combined image data". These distinct features have been added separately to different independent claims and render them allowable.

- Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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- Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Amir Alavi whose telephone number is 571-272-7386. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu.. 8:00 am thru 6:30pm.
- If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Bella C. Matthew can be reached on 571-272-7778. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.
- Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AA
Technology Division 2624
05 October 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AA', is located in the bottom right corner of the page.